

## BUILDRES Project

Project number: 2024-2-CY01-KA220-YOU-000295718

### EU COUNTRIES DESK RESEARCH

Partner organisation: University of Thessaly

Research on: Italy

#### 1. Country overview

Italy's resident population on 1 Jan 2025 was **58.93 million** (provisional), continuing a gradual decline. **Births in 2024 fell to ~370,000**, a new historic low-down from ~379,000 in 2023. Italy's **total fertility rate dropped to 1.18 in 2024** (about **1.20 in 2023**), among the lowest in the EU (Istat, 2024).

Italy has the oldest first-time mothers in Europe. In **2023 the mean age at first birth was 31.8 years** (EU average: 29.8), while the **mean age at any childbirth** is also high by EU standards, reaching **32.5**. (European Commission, Eurostat, 2023). It is worthwhile to note that in 1995 were born 526.000 children compared to 370.000 in 2024. Households are becoming increasingly smaller: in the last 20 years the average size has dropped from 2.6 members to the current 2.2 (Istat, 2024).

Italy is among the OECD countries with **maternal employment below 60%**, and part-time among employed mothers is common compared with Nordic/Eastern EU peers. Limited childcare coverage in some areas and traditional gender norms contribute to the gap (OECD family database, 2023).

Statutory maternity leave in Italy lasts **five months**, paid at **80% of the employee's salary**, with many collective agreements topping it up to full pay (INPS, 2024). **Mandatory paternity leave** consists of **10 working days fully paid at 100%**, introduced through *Legislative Decree No. 105/2022* in line with **Directive (EU) 2019/1158** and detailed in **INPS Circular No. 122/2022** (European Commission, 2024; INPS, 2022). Beyond these, **each parent** is entitled to **three months of non-transferable parental leave** paid at **30%** of salary (INPS, 2023). Recent **temporary enhancements** introduced by the **2024 Budget Law** allow **up to two months** of this leave to be compensated at a **higher replacement rate** (one month at 80% and one at 60%, both raised to 80% for 2024) (INPS, 2023; Italian Parliament, 2023). In total, **sharable parental leave** can extend to **10–11 months per child**, depending on the father's uptake and the division of non-transferable months (OECD, 2023; INPS, 2024).

Since 2022 Italy pays the **Assegno Unico e Universale** (Single and Universal Allowance) for dependent children. Amounts are **income-graded** (e.g., **up to ~€201/month per child** at low ISEE, down to **~€57.5** at high ISEE), with **supplements** for later-born children, very young mothers, and disability (INPS, 2025).

In sum, Italy combines **very low fertility, very late first births, below-EU maternal employment**, and **expanding but still inadequate family supports** relative to needs. Recent tweaks to parental-leave replacement rates and the universal child allowance aim to ease constraints, but structural drivers

(job precarity, childcare coverage, costs, and norms) continue to weigh on **parenthood decisions and family size**.

## 2. Healthcare services available & accessibility

Italy operates a **universal public healthcare system**, the *Servizio Sanitario Nazionale* (SSN), funded primarily through general taxation and regional administrations. The SSN guarantees **free or low-cost access** to essential healthcare services for all residents, including EU citizens and legal migrants, with coverage for **obstetric, prenatal, childbirth, and postnatal care** in public hospitals and accredited facilities (Ministero della Salute, 2023).

Regarding **reproductive health**, abortion in Italy is legal under **Law 194/1978**, allowing termination on request during the **first 90 days** of pregnancy and later under specific medical or ethical conditions (e.g. fetal anomaly, risk to the mother's health). Access may vary regionally due to the high rate of *conscientious objection* among healthcare professionals (European Parliament, 2023). **Assisted reproductive technologies (ART)**, including IVF, are regulated by **Law 40/2004**, which permits treatment for heterosexual couples with medical infertility and, following court rulings, for those using heterologous fertilisation (ISS, 2023).

**Postnatal care** is typically provided through public hospitals, followed by follow-up visits at local *consultori familiari* (family counselling centres) that offer parental guidance, contraception counselling, and psychological support. Although the SSN ensures broad coverage, **regional disparities** in service quality and waiting times remain significant, particularly between northern and southern regions (OECD, 2023).

## 3. Financial and Social Benefits Related to Family, Parenthood, and Health

### Maternity and Paternity Leave

Women employed and insured under the Italian National Social Security Institute (*INPS*) are entitled to **five months of compulsory maternity leave**, usually divided into **two months before and three after childbirth**, compensated at **80% of their average salary** (INPS, 2024). Collective agreements in some sectors top up payments to full pay. Fathers are entitled to **ten working days of compulsory paternity leave**, fully paid at **100% of salary**, to be taken within five months after birth (*Legislative Decree 105/2022*). Beyond these, both parents have access to **parental leave** (*congedo parentale*): three months are non-transferable per parent, paid at **30% of salary**, while up to **two additional months** are compensated at **80%** under the **2024 Budget Law** (Italian Parliament, 2023; INPS, 2023).

### Family and Child Benefits

Since 2022, Italy has introduced the **Assegno Unico e Universale per i Figli a Carico** (Single and Universal Child Allowance), a **monthly payment for all families** with dependent children up to age 21. The allowance ranges from **€57.5 to €201 per child per month**, depending on family income (*ISEE*) and increases for larger families, children under one year, or children with disabilities (INPS, 2023). Additional supports include **maternity grants** for low-income mothers (*Bonus Mamma Domani*), **baby bonuses**, and **nursery fee subsidies** (*Bonus Asilo Nido*), promoting early childhood care and female employment (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2024).



## Non-Governmental and Community Services

Civil-society and community organisations complement state welfare. **Telefono Rosa** offers psychological and legal support to mothers and women facing domestic violence; **Associazione Luca Coscioni** advocates for reproductive rights and assisted fertility access; **Caritas Italiana** and **Save the Children Italia** support vulnerable families with material aid, counselling, and childcare programs; and **Consultori familiari** (family counselling centres) provide free reproductive health, prenatal, and parenting support, accessible to citizens and migrants alike (EuroHealthNet, 2023).

## Hotlines and Emergency Services

- **1522 – National Domestic Violence and Stalking Helpline** (24/7, multilingual)
- **112 – European Emergency Number** (multi-service)
- **118 – Medical and Ambulance Emergencies**
- **Telefono Amico Italia (02 2327 2327)** – Emotional support and mental health helpline

## Digital Resources and Online Platforms

Migrants and citizens can access accurate information and assistance through:

- [www.inps.it](http://www.inps.it) – maternity, paternity, and family benefits;
- [www.salute.gov.it](http://www.salute.gov.it) – Ministry of Health portal for reproductive and maternal care;
- [www.consultori.it](http://www.consultori.it) – network of family counselling centres;
- [www.telefonorosa.it](http://www.telefonorosa.it) – resources and helpline for women and mothers;
- [www.savethechildren.it](http://www.savethechildren.it) – support programs for children and families in Italy.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Name of the organisation</b>                  | Ministero della Salute (Italian Ministry of Health)  |
| <b>Short Description (Around 300 characters)</b> | National public authority managing the Servizio Sanitario Nazionale (SSN) and policies on maternal, child, and reproductive health. Offers information, vaccination programs, and national guidelines. |
| <b>Country</b>                                   | <b>Italy</b>   |
| <b>Mail</b>                                      | <a href="mailto:urp@sanita.it">urp@sanita.it</a>   |
| <b>Phone</b>                                     | +39 06 5994 1  |
| <b>Website</b>                                   | <a href="http://www.salute.gov.it">www.salute.gov.it</a>   |
| <b>Address</b>                                   | <b>Lungotevere Ripa, 1 – 00153 Rome</b>  |
| <b>Name of the organisation</b>                  | Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale (INPS)   |
| <b>Short Description (Around 300 characters)</b> | Main public body administering maternity/paternity leave, parental benefits, and family allowances (Assegno Unico). Provides guidance and online applications for insured parents.                     |
| <b>Country</b>                                   | <b>Italy</b>   |
| <b>Mail</b>                                      | <a href="mailto:urp.inps@inps.it">urp.inps@inps.it</a>   |
| <b>Phone</b>                                     | +39 06 164 164   |
| <b>Website</b>                                   | <a href="http://www.inps.it">www.inps.it</a>   |
| <b>Address</b>                                   | Via Ciro il Grande, 21 – 00144 Rome  |
| <b>Name of the organisation</b>                  | Consultorio Familiare Comunale di Roma Capitale  |
| <b>Short Description (Around 300 characters)</b> | Public family counselling centre providing free services on contraception, prenatal and postnatal care, parenting support, and psychological counselling for residents and migrants.                   |
| <b>Country</b>                                   | <b>Italy</b>   |
| <b>Mail</b>                                      | <a href="mailto:consultorio@aslroma1.it">consultorio@aslroma1.it</a>   |
| <b>Phone</b>                                     | +39 06 7730 6100   |
| <b>Website</b>                                   | <a href="http://www.aslroma1.it">www.aslroma1.it</a>   |
| <b>Address</b>                                   | <b>Via Silveri, 8 – 00165 Rome</b>   |
| <b>Name of the organisation</b>                  | <b>Telefono Rosa Onlus</b>   |
| <b>Short Description (Around 300 characters)</b> | National NGO supporting women and mothers facing domestic violence or psychosocial distress. Offers free psychological, legal, and social assistance, and operates the 1522 hotline.                   |
| <b>Country</b>                                   | <b>Italy</b>   |
| <b>Mail</b>                                      | <a href="mailto:info@telefonorosa.it">info@telefonorosa.it</a>   |
| <b>Phone</b>                                     | +39 06 3751 8282   |
| <b>Website</b>                                   | <a href="http://www.telefonorosa.it">www.telefonorosa.it</a>   |
| <b>Address</b>                                   | <b>Via Antonio Salandra, 38 – 00187 Rome</b>   |
| <b>Name of the organisation</b>                  | Humanitas San Pio X Hospital (Private, Accredited)   |
| <b>Short Description (Around 300 characters)</b> | Private hospital in Milan accredited by the SSN, offering maternity, neonatal, and reproductive health services including assisted fertilization and obstetrics.                                       |
| <b>Country</b>                                   | <b>Italy</b>   |
| <b>Mail</b>                                      | <a href="mailto:info.sanpiox@humanitas.it">info.sanpiox@humanitas.it</a>   |



|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Phone</b>   | +39 02 6951 11   |
| <b>Website</b> | <a href="http://www.humanitas-sanpiox.it">www.humanitas-sanpiox.it</a> |
| <b>Address</b> | Via Francesco Nava, 31 – 20159 Milan                                   |